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**TO: District Office Managers/Coordinators**

FROM: Jim Lake, Assistant Director-SWCD Support

DATE: August 30, 2004

RE: Recruiting SWCD Supervisor Candidates for upcoming Election and /or Appointment

I want to congratulate districts that have heightened their emphasis on selecting the best qualified candidates to fill appointed and elected supervisor positions. The importance of districts providing local guidance for the management of soil and water resources cannot be over-emphasized. Each year, the challenges and opportunities for SWCDs to provide local leadership on resource issues such as erosion and sediment control, nutrient management, and other water quality improvement efforts gain greater attention in the public and private sectors. A district's ability to address these resource management issues, now and in the future, is significantly dependent on the strength of its supervisors.

**The time to recommend and nominate candidates for both your appointed and elected supervisor positions is rapidly approaching. As you well know, your Chairperson needs to appoint an election committee and report the names of the supervisors serving on it to the State Soil Conservation Board by November 1. The names of the individual(s) recommended by your district to serve in the open appointed position(s) are also due November 1. And by December 1, the names of at least two nominees for the open elected position(s) must be submitted to the State Soil Conservation Board in order for districts to hold the election for supervisor(s) at their respective annual meetings.** The required forms for submitting names by the deadlines mentioned will be mailed to your district immediately following the September 21 State Soil Conservation Board Meeting.

As we enter this important time of the year, the Conservation Program Specialists and I want to encourage your district to seriously consider the following two suggestions we believe will help your district increase its pool of potential candidates for both the elected and appointed positions.

1. **Discuss supervisor recruitment at your next monthly meeting. Take time to brainstorm ideas on how to expand local interest in serving as an SWCD supervisor.** In doing so, we suggest you review how recruitment is currently done. Consider such things as how your district makes capable people in your community aware of the need for candidates, how your district approaches potential candidates, what you think potential candidates want to know about your district, and how you describe the responsibilities of a supervisor. Then talk about what aspects of your current recruitment process should be modified or enhanced.

2. **Consider using one or more of the recruitment tools in the attachment to this email titled “Recruitment Tools and Templates” over the next couple of months. The attachment contains a list of tools for reaching out to your community through the media using radio/television public announcements, news releases, news articles, etc. Along with each suggested tool are several sample templates you can copy into a word file and modify to fit your local situation should you choose to use them to help “spread the word.”** Be sure to include the district address and contact information on any of the templates you use so interested persons know who to contact and how. These samples came from the NACD Supervisor Recruitment Module with some modifications we made to make them more applicable to Indiana. The “Recruitment Tools and Templates” will also be posted on the DNR-Division of Soil Conservation website at [www.in.gov/dnr/soilcons/swcd](http://www.in.gov/dnr/soilcons/swcd) under “Tools to assist Districts” for future reference and use.

Remember, that for elected supervisors there is no limit to the number of nominees you may have on the ballot, provided each one is of voting age, resides in the district, and owns or leases more than 10 acres within the district. Individuals recommended for appointment need only meet the residence and age requirements.

The Conservation program Specialists and I realize many districts will want to recommend reappointment or will anticipate re-election of an incumbent supervisor. Such actions often ensure the strength and continuity of a good district program. Thus, the purpose of this letter and the attachment material is not to call into question current supervisors that are servicing their respective districts well. Instead, it is intended to help those districts that are currently struggling with recruitment of new supervisors and/or are seeking new candidates to help broaden the knowledge and experience base of your respective boards. Our goal, as is yours, is to help districts provide superior service to the citizens of your respective counties.

cc: Pete Hippensteel  
Harry Nikides  
Conservation Program Specialists  
Sherman Bryant  
Jane Hardisty  
Tom Jordan  
Dean Farr